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Survey of the Amount of Student Testing and the Uses of Those Tests

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Abstract

This report investigates critics' claims that Kentucky's students are subjected to an overabundance of testing, which thereby detracts from instruction and consequently student learning. To investigate the validity of this claim, Kentucky's district assessment coordinators (DACs) were surveyed about their district's assessment programs. Survey results indicate that the majority of districts administer three or fewer tests in addition to those required by the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS). The majority of these non-CATS mandated tests are administered at the early elementary school level; grades not currently assessed by any of the CATS component tests. DACS indicated that more time was spent on test preparation activities than test follow-up activities, particularly for Kentucky Core Content Tests (KCCT). In addition, DACs generally indicate that: (1) their current assessment program elicits moderate to high levels of pressure among students and teachers, (2) the current amount of testing represents an assessment system that equals or includes more than their ideal program, and (3) the costs of the current assessment program equal or outweigh the benefits. Also, when asked which tests should be retained or added, DACs frequently indicated that they would like to see CTBS tests for all school levels. More than half the respondents also favored keeping the KCCT exams at all grade levels, but the responses were not as positive as for CTBS tests. The implications of these results are discussed in relation to the augmented off-grade testing scheduled to begin in spring 2005.

SURVEY OF THE AMOUNT OF STUDENT TESTING AND THE USES OF THOSE TESTS

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Introduction

One of the consistent arguments of testing critics is that there is too much testing, so much so that testing detracts from instruction and consequently, student learning. Certainly, the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS), including the norm-referenced test (NRT) component, requires that all Kentucky public school students from Grades 3-12 spend some amount of time testing. On the other hand, little is known about the amount of additional testing that actually occurs in Kentucky schools. If testing is as prevalent as critics claim, it is important to know why schools/districts choose to administer the additional tests. The purposes of these tests can then be discussed in terms of student benefits and ultimately defined in terms of improved student education.

Methodology

Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO) researchers developed a survey to be distributed to all 176 of Kentucky's District Assessment Coordinators (DACs); this survey was reviewed by a DAC, who suggested several modifications prior to distribution. These modifications were made to the survey.

E-mail versions of the survey, along with a cover letter, were distributed to all DACs in late January 2004 via the "DAC Monday email," a regular communication from the Kentucky Department of Education's (KDE) Division of Assessment Implementation[1]. DACs were instructed to bring the completed surveys to their winter meetings, where they would be collected for return to HumRRO.

DACs were given the option of returning surveys by mail, if they preferred. Preaddressed envelopes were provided at the winter DAC meetings. HumRRO researchers received 99 surveys (56 percent), most of which had been turned in at the meetings. Only two or three were returned via mail. We note that one returned survey was completely blank. Given that no follow-up notices were sent to prompt additional completions, the response rate of 56% is reasonable and compares favorably to response rates from other similar studies. For example, in surveys of teachers, Koger and Koger (2001; 2002) obtained response rates ranging from 52% to 55%.

Analysis

Survey responses were entered in Microsoft® Excel spreadsheets. Statistical analysis was completed using Excel and SPSS®. Questions 1 and 2 were analyzed by test; the remaining questions were analyzed by district. To preserve districts' confidentiality, district names are not used in the report, and results are presented in summary form only.

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[1] The cover letter and survey can be found in the appendix.

Results

Question 1

The first question asked DACs to list all tests their district is responsible for administering to the majority of students and to indicate, by filling in the appropriate bubble, the grade(s) in which they are given. The survey already indicated that KCCT tests were given in Grades 4-5, 7-8, and 10-12 and CTBS-5 math and language arts tests associated with CATS were given in Grades 3, 6, and 9. These tests are mandated by CATS and are given in spring each year. Rather than selecting from a predetermined list, DACs were instructed to fill in the name of each test and fill in the appropriate grade(s). This was done so as not to limit their selections in any way. The survey contained space for 20 tests—3 mandated ones that were already included and 17 optional selections. Table 1 displays the complete list of the tests identified by DACs and the number of times those tests were mentioned for each school level. The greatest number of tests was mentioned for the early elementary school level (39.0%), and the fewest number of tests was mentioned for the later elementary school level (15.3%).

Table 1. Number and Type of Tests Administered by School Level

Test Names	Number of Times Mentioned:				
	Early Elementary	Later Elementary	Middle School	High School	Total
1. CTBS-5 general (Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills)	79	11	22	23	135
2. CTBS-5 complete battery	20	2	4	1	27
3. CTBS-5 complete battery plus	10	0	1	1	12
4. CTBS-5 basic battery	7	0	0	0	7
5. CTBS-5 basic battery plus	4	0	0	0	4
6. CTBS-5 survey	8	5	6	2	21
7. CTBS-5 survey plus	22	5	16	13	56
8. Fall CTBS-5 reading	4	0	1	1	6
9. Fall CTBS-5 math	4	0	1	1	6
10. Fall CTBS-5 complete battery	4	2	4	5	15
11. TCS-2 (Test of Cognitive Skills)	26	9	24	16	75
12. CAT-5 reading (California Achievement Test)	3	1	1	1	6
13. CAT-5 math	3	1	1	1	6
14. CAT-5 general	8	6	7	7	28
15. Fall CAT-5 complete battery	1	0	0	0	1
16. Explore (associated with ACT)	0	0	11	0	11
17. PLAN (associated with ACT)	0	0	0	19	19
18. ACT (American College Test)	0	0	0	15	15
19. SAT	0	0	0	6	6
20. ASVAB (Armed Forces Vocational Aptitude Battery)	0	0	0	14	14
21. PSAT/NMSQT (Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test)	0	0	0	14	14
22. NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress)	0	0	0	1	1
23. Star Diagnostic	3	2	1	0	6
24. STAR Early Literacy	12	1	0	0	13

Test Names	Number of Times Mentioned:				
	Early Elementary	Later Elementary	Middle School	High School	Total
25. STAR Reading	23	16	22	9	70
26. STAR Math	14	15	20	2	51
27. SREB/HSTW (Southern Regional Education Board/High Schools That Work)	0	0	2	6	8
28. DRA/Early Lit (Developmental Reading Assessment/Early Lit)	3	0	0	0	3
29. Developmental Reading Assessment	22	2	0	0	24
30. PASS (Predictive Assessment System for Students)	6	8	8	5	27
31. District Assessment of Reading	4	0	0	0	4
32. District Assessment of Math	2	2	5	6	15
33. District assessments science	0	0	0	4	4
34. District assess end of book all content areas	4	2	3	4	13
35. Skill Standards	0	0	0	14	14
36. Ravens Progressive Matrices	3	2	1	1	7
37. Dial 3 (Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning)	1	0	0	0	1
38. Naglieri (Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test)	1	1	0	0	2
39. Brigance (from Curriculum Associates, Inc.)	6	2	0	0	8
40. Scholastic Reading Inventory	1	1	2	2	6
41. Woodcock Johnson	4	2	3	0	9
42. Scrimmage testing	4	2	3	4	13
43. KCCT scrimmage testing	0	6	4	6	16
44. Open response	0	2	0	0	2
45. KCCT Coach	1	2	3	0	6
46. Test Ready	4	6	7	5	22
47. CTBS math/LA scrimmage tests	2	0	2	2	6
48. CTBS Scoring High	1	2	3	0	6
49. State released items	1	2	3	3	9
50. Gifted and Talented	1	0	0	0	1
51. Kindergarten Skills Assessments	1	0	0	0	1
52. AP testing (Advanced Placement testing)	0	0	0	0	0
53. Accelerated Reader Assessments	14	6	7	8	35
54. Reading Recovery	3	0	0	0	3
55. DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills)	14	2	1	0	17
56. Gates McGinite Reading	3	2	0	0	5
57. Interest Inventories	0	0	1	1	2
58. Math placement	0	0	1	0	1
59. Orleans Hanna Math/Lang.	0	0	1	0	1
60. Lightspan	3	2	1	0	6
61. Otis-Lennon (OLSAT 7)	5	2	3	1	11
62. Scholastic School Readiness Test	3	0	0	0	3
63. Measures of Academic Progress	4	4	6	4	18
64. FUCHS	2	2	1	0	5
65. Yopp-Singer (Yopp-Singer Test of Phoneme Segmentation)	3	0	0	0	3
66. Reading Workshop	2	1	0	0	3

Test Names	Number of Times Mentioned:				
	Early Elementary	Later Elementary	Middle School	High School	Total
67. Learning Styles	0	0	3	0	3
68. M. Clay Assessment	2	0	0	0	2
69. GRADE-reading (Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation)	6	0	0	0	6
70. Scantron Performance Series	3	4	6	8	21
71. EdVision Performance Online	1	2	3	1	7
72. Scantron/EdVision reading	2	2	3	0	7
73. Scantron/EdVision math	2	2	3	0	7
74. Key Math/Reading	0	2	3	4	9
75. SDS-Occupation Finder (Self-Directed Search)	0	0	1	0	1
76. Achieve	2	2	5	5	14
77. ThinkLink	0	2	3	0	5
78. Wasatch Math	3	2	3	0	8
79. Great Leaps	3	2	3	0	8
80. America Reads	3	0	0	0	3
81. Earobics	3	2	0	0	5
82. Reading Counts	3	2	0	0	5
83. Iowa Basic Pre-Algebra	0	0	2	0	2
84. Algebra Readiness Test	0	0	1	0	1
85. Book Placement Tests	4	2	3	4	13
86. Breakthrough to Literacy	3	0	0	0	3
87. KBIT (Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test)	1	0	0	0	1
88. STEPS	1	0	0	0	1
89. Williams Creativity Assessment	0	1	0	0	1
90. Kaufman	1	0	0	0	1
91. I-Know-CTB	1	0	0	0	1
92. CCC math and reading (from SuccessMaker-Enterprise [Pearson])	4	2	3	0	9
93. Informal Reading Assessment	2	0	0	0	2
Total number of tests mentioned per school level:	433 39%	170 15.3%	258 23.2%	250 22.5%	1111

Table 2 presents a more complete picture of the number of additional tests (not required components of CATS) given in districts. DACs gave a wide range of responses, from 0 to 15 additional tests.

Table 2. Number of Tests Given in Districts by Number of Districts

Number of additional tests given in districts	Number of districts
0	13 (13%)
1	26 (26%)
2	15 (15%)
3	11 (11%)
4	5 (5%)
5	8 (8%)
6	5 (5%)
7	3 (3%)
8	4 (4%)
9	4 (4%)
10	1 (1%)
11	1 (1%)
15	2 (2%)
X (no response given)	1 (1%)
	Total: 99

Overall, the results from Question 1 indicate that some Kentucky public school districts are indeed giving a great number of tests beyond those mandated by CATS, particularly at the early elementary school level. We discovered 93 tests being given across the state, not counting the CATS mandated tests.

We used the CTB McGraw-Hill website (http://www.ctb.com) to obtain information on the different CTBS tests available and used the information to help clarify DAC responses as needed. DACs frequently designated the following CTBS tests as ones they used:

- CTBS Complete Battery (tests reading/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies

- CTBS Complete Battery Plus (adds word analysis, vocabulary, language mechanics, spelling, and math computation)

- CTBS Basic Battery (tests reading/language arts and math)

- CTBS Basic Battery Plus (adds word analysis, vocabulary, language mechanics, spelling, and math computation)

- CTBS Survey (tests are shorter than Battery tests; tests reading/language arts, mathematics, science and social studies)

- CTBS Survey Plus (adds word analysis, vocabulary, language mechanics, spelling, and math computation)

Unfortunately, some DACs listed additional CTBS tests in more general terms, such as "CTBS," "CTBS off grade," or "CTBS Plus." We found that we needed to create a "general" CTBS category for these responses that did not exactly match the official test names or descriptions. Even though it lacks the precision of other CTBS categories, it still shows us that, in addition to the mandated CTBS tests in Grades 3, 6, and 9, districts are using CTBS in other grades and often to test additional content areas.

Question 2

This question asked respondents to select a main and a secondary purpose (if applicable) for administering the tests. Respondents were asked to select purposes from a list of the following eight options: A = Screening for diagnostic insights such as academic problems/difficulties/weaknesses; B = Helping measure student achievement; C = Helping change instructional practice; D = Student accountability; E = Teacher accountability; F = School/district accountability; G = Helping to inform retention/promotion/placement decisions. Respondents were asked to limit themselves to one main purpose and one secondary purpose per test; most honored this direction but a few did not. In those instances, we ignored the additional entries and took the first entry listed from each category. We then added together the main purpose "A's" and the secondary purpose "A's," the main purpose "B's" and the secondary purpose "B's," and so forth until all of the main purposes were added to all the corresponding secondary purposes. Table 3 displays the number of times each purpose was mentioned for all of the tests, and Table 4 displays the percentage of times each purpose was mentioned for CATS (i.e., KCCT, CTBS-5 math, and CTBS-5 language) versus the non-CATS mandated tests (i.e., the "other" tests).

For CATS, the most frequently mentioned purpose for administering the tests was school/district accountability; this purpose received 41.9% of the responses. Helping measure student achievement was the next most frequently mentioned purpose for administering CATS with 33.5% of DACs selecting this purpose. Helping to inform retention/promotion/placement decisions was the least mentioned purpose for administering CATS; only .04% of the DACs selected this option[2]. Teacher accountability and student accountability also received a low percentage of responses.

For the non-CATS tests, the most frequently mentioned purpose for administering the tests was to help measure student achievement; 35.7% of the DACs selected this purpose. Teacher accountability and student accountability were the most infrequently mentioned

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[2] Please note that none of the DACs selected the "Other" purpose option for CATS tests.

purposes for administering the non-CATS tests. These purposes received only 2.4% and 3.7% of the responses, respectively.

Table 3. Sum of Test Purposes

Test Names	Number of Times Mentioned							
	Diag[1]	Stu. Ach.[2]	Instr.[3]	Stu. Acct.[4]	Tch. Acct.[5]	Sch./ Dist. Acct.[6]	PD[7]	Oth[8]
	A	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**	**F**	**G**	**H**
1. CTBS-5 general	15	28	19	2	1	5	0	0
2. CTBS-5 complete battery	1	7	4	0	2	0	0	0
3. CTBS-5 complete battery plus	1	3	3	1	1	1	0	0
4. CTBS-5 basic battery	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
5. CTBS-5 basic battery plus	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
6. CTBS-5 survey	1	6	2	1	2	0	0	0
7. CTBS-5 survey plus	2	9	10	1	1	3	1	0
8. Fall CTBS-5 reading	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
9. Fall CTBS-5 math	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
10. Fall CTBS-5 complete battery	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
11. TCS-2	12	12	7	2	1	0	4	5
12. CAT-5 reading	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
13. CAT-5 math	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
14. CAT-5 general	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	0
15. Fall CAT-5 complete battery	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
16. Explore	3	9	1	0	0	0	2	4
17. PLAN	3	14	2	1	0	0	2	10
18. ACT	0	5	1	1	0	0	0	3
19. SAT	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
20. ASVAB	1	3	0	0	0	0	3	11
21. PSAT/NMSQT	0	9	0	1	0	0	2	4
22. NAEP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
23. Star Diagnostic	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
24. STAR Early Literacy	4	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
25. STAR Reading	5	9	3	0	0	0	2	0
26. STAR Math	5	6	1	0	0	1	1	0
27. SREB/HSTW	0	3	3	0	0	1	0	2
28. DRA/Early Lit	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
29. Developmental Reading Assessment	4	4	3	1	0	0	0	0
30. PASS (Predictive Assessment System for Students	2	3	4	0	0	0	0	0
31. District Assessment of Reading	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
32. District Assessment of Math	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
33. District assessments science	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
34. District assess end of book all content areas	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
35. Skill Standards	0	5	1	0	0	2	0	0
36. Ravens Progressive Matrices	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
37. Dial 3	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
38. Naglieri	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	0

Test Names	Number of Times Mentioned							
	Diag[1]	Stu. Ach.[2]	Instr.[3]	Stu. Acct.[4]	Tch. Acct.[5]	Sch./ Dist. Acct.[6]	PD[7]	Oth[8]
	A	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**	**F**	**G**	**H**
39. Brigance	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	1
40. Scholastic Reading Inventory	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0
41. Woodcock Johnson	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
42. Scrimmage testing	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
43. KCCT scrimmage testing	0	1	2	0	0	1	0	0
44. Open response	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
45. KCCT Coach	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
46. Test Ready	1	3	1	1	0	0	0	0
47. CTBS math/LA scrimmage tests	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
48. CTBS Scoring High	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
49. State released items	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
50. Gifted and Talented	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
51. Kindergarten Skills Assessments	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
52. AP testing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
53. Accel Reader Assessments	1	3	1	0	0	0	1	0
54. Reading Recovery	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
55. DIBELS	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
56. Gates McGinite Reading	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
57. Interest Inventories	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
58. Math placement	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
59. Orleans Hanna Math/Lang.	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
60. Lightspan	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
61. Otis-Lennon (OLSAT 7)	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	1
62. Scholastic School Readiness Test	2	0	0	0	1	0	3	0
63. Measures of Academic Progress	2	3	1	0	0	0	0	0
64. FUCHS	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
65. Yopp-Singer	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
66. Reading Workshop	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
67. Learning Styles	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	1
68. M. Clay Assessment	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
69. GRADE-reading	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
70. Scantron Performance Series	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	0
71. EdVision Performance Online	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
72. Scantron/EdVision reading	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
73. Scantron/EdVision math	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
74. Key Math/Reading	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
75. SDS-Occupation Finder	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
76. Achieve	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
77. ThinkLink	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
78. Wasatch Math	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
79. Great Leaps	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
80. America Reads	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
81. Earobics	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
82. Reading Counts	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

	Number of Times Mentioned							
Test Names	Diag[1]	Stu. Ach.[2]	Instr.[3]	Stu. Acct.[4]	Tch. Acct.[5]	Sch./ Dist. Acct.[6]	PD[7]	Oth[8]
	A	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**	**F**	**G**	**H**
83. Iowa Basic Pre-Algebra	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
84. Algebra Readiness Test	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
85. Book Placement Tests	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
86. Breakthrough to Literacy	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
87. KBIT	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
88. STEPS	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
89. Williams Creativity Assessment	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
90. Kaufman	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
91. I-Know-CTB	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
92. CCC math and reading	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
93. Informal Reading Assessment	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
94. KCCT tests	5	54	27	4	3	76	0	0
95. CTBS-5 math (CATS)	7	59	28	4	3	70	1	0
96. CTBS-5 LA (CATS)	7	59	28	5	3	69	1	0

[1]Diagnostic
[2]Student achievement
[3]Instructional practice
[4]Student accountability
[5]Teacher accountability
[6]School/district accountability
[7]Placement decisions
[8]Other

Table 4. Percent Purpose Mentioned by Test Type

	Percent of Times Mentioned							
Test Type	Diag	Stu. Ach.	Instr.	Stu. Acct.	Tch. Acct.	Sch./ Dist. Acct.	PD	Oth
	A	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**	**F**	**G**	**H**
CATS	3.7%	33.5%	16.2%	2.5%	1.8%	41.9%	0.04%	0.0%
Non-CATS	20.3%	35.7%	18.4%	3.7%	2.4%	3.5%	6.9%	9.1%

Question 3

The third question asked DACs if their schools do any special test preparation activities for the tests they listed. DACs were asked to use each test's administration time as the baseline time; they were to indicate whether the preparation activities took more time, less time, or about the same amount of time as the actual administration time for the particular test. They were also given a "Do not know/does not apply" option. The DACs were instructed to answer this question for each of the three tests mandated by CATS, and for each of the "other" non-CATS tests they listed in Question 1. The percentage of DACs endorsing each response category was calculated for all three mandated tests. All of the "other" tests were combined and percentages were calculated for the combined other tests by dividing the sum in each response category by the total

number of other responses. In addition, the average number of other tests per district was calculated by adding together the total number of responses in each category (not including the Do not know/Does not apply responses) divided by 93, the total number of DACs responding to this question. This resulted in a mean of 2.86 non-CATS tests administered per district. Table 5 displays the percent of DACs responding to each category. Table 5 also reveals that approximately two thirds of DACs felt that more time was spent preparing for KCCT than administering KCCT, whereas only one half of the DACs surveyed said that more time was spent preparing for CTBS-5 math and language than administering them. More than one half of the DACs said they spent less time preparing for the "other" non-CATS tests than they did administering them.

Table 5. Amount of Time Spent Preparing for Assessments

Test Name	More than amount of time spent in admin of this test	Less than amount of time spent in admin of this test	About the same amount of time spent in admin of this test	Do not know/Does not apply
KCCT	67.00%	16.50%	16.50%	0.00%
CTBS-5 Math	50.50%	28.90%	20.60%	0.00%
CTBS-5 Lang.	50.50%	29.90%	19.60%	0.00%
Other[1]	20.20%	50.66%	17.22%	11.92%

Note. Percentages are valid percents.
[1]Mean "other" tests per district = 2.86

Question 4

The fourth question was similar in format to the previous question; however, it asked DACs to indicate the amount of time spent engaging in special follow-up activities compared to the amount of time spent taking the test. DACs were asked to indicate whether the follow-up activities took more time, less time, or about the same amount of time as the actual administration time for the particular test. They were also given a "Do not know/does not apply" option. They were instructed to answer this question for each of the three tests mandated by CATS, and for each of the "other" tests they listed in Question 1. Once again, the percentage of DACs endorsing each response category was calculated for all three mandated tests as well as for the "other" non-CATS tests. The average number of other tests per district was calculated by adding together the total number of responses in each category (not including the Do not know/Does not apply responses) divided by the total number of DACs responding to this question. Slightly fewer DACs responded to Question 4; consequently, fewer other tests were mentioned in Question 4. This impacted the mean number of "other" tests slightly. The mean number of other tests per district was 2.80. Table 6 displays the percent of DACs responding to each category. The responses were similar for all four test categories. For all tests, more than one half of the DACs indicated that less time was spent on follow-up activities than on the administration of the tests.

Table 6. Amount of Time Spent on Follow-up Activities

Test Name	More than amount of time spent in admin of this test	Less than amount of time spent in admin of this test	About the same amount of time spent in admin of this test	Do not know/Does not apply
KCCT	19.80%	52.10%	11.50%	16.70%
CTBS-5 Math	17.70%	54.20%	12.50%	15.60%
CTBS-5 Lang.	17.70%	54.20%	12.50%	15.60%
Other[1]	20.82%	51.54%	13.99%	13.65%

Note. Percentages are valid percents.
[1]Mean "other" tests per district = 2.80

Question 5

The fifth question asked DACs to indicate how many hours teachers spend in professional development related to all types of testing. DACs were asked to complete this question for four different levels of teachers: early elementary (K-3), late elementary (4-5), middle school (6-8), and high school (9-12). Table 7 displays the mean number of professional development hours spent on testing by school level. Table 7 indicates that across all four school levels, teachers are devoting approximately eight hours of professional development towards testing. According to KRS 158.070, teachers are required to devote four 6-hour days each year to professional development. Of those four days, one day can be used for district wide activities as directed by the superintendent; the other three days are at the discretion of the School-Based Decision Making (SBDM) council. Districts can require additional professional hours beyond the 24-hour state minimum, however.

Table 7. Time Spent on Professional Development

Average number of hours:	Teachers by level:
7.54 (6.10)	Early elementary
8.37 (6.19)	Late elementary
8.08 (6.11)	Middle school
7.96 (6.13)	High school

Note. Value in parentheses = standard deviation.

Question 6

This question asked DACs to consider the amount of testing pressure that students face in their current assessment program in the four levels previously discussed. DACs were asked to consider all testing given in their districts, not just CATS mandated tests. They were asked to indicate whether **most** of their students face "too little pressure," "slightly too little pressure," "the right amount of pressure," "slightly too much pressure," or "too much pressure." Table 8 displays the percent of DACs selecting each response category for each school level. The

majority of DACs surveyed perceived early elementary students as facing the least amount of test pressure of all school levels. Only 15% of DACs said that early elementary students face slightly too much or too much pressure. Late elementary students, however, were perceived by 52% of DACs as facing at least slightly too much pressure. The most popular response from the DACs at every grade level was that students faced the "right amount of pressure."

Table 8. Students' Level of Pressure Under Current Assessment Program

Student Level	Too little pressure	Slightly too little pressure	Right amount of pressure	Slightly too much pressure	Too much pressure
Early elementary	7.2%	8.2%	69.1%	11.3%	4.1%
Late elementary	0%	6.1%	41.8%	29.6%	22.4%
Middle school	3.1%	19.6%	39.2%	23.7%	14.4%
High school	11.5%	18.8%	38.5%	18.8%	11.5%

Note. Percentages are valid percents.

Question 7

This question is similar to the previous question, except that it asked about the amount of testing pressure that teachers face in the four school levels.

Table 9 displays the percent of DACs responding to each category from the perspective of teachers. As with student-level pressure, DACs perceive that early elementary teachers face the least amount of test pressure and that late elementary teachers face the most amount of test pressure. Even though the rank order of least and most amount of pressure by school level is the same for students and teachers, DACs indicated that teachers faced substantially more testing pressure than students. For example, only 15% of DACs said that early elementary students face slightly too much or too much pressure, whereas 48% of DACs indicate that early elementary teachers face slightly too much or too much pressure. Similarly, 52% of DACs indicated that late elementary students faced at least slightly too much pressure, whereas more than 75% of DACs indicated that late elementary teachers faced at least slightly too much pressure.

Table 9. Teachers' Level of Pressure Under Current Assessment Program

Teacher Level	Too little pressure	Slightly too little pressure	Right amount of pressure	Slightly too much pressure	Too much pressure
Early elementary	5.1%	11.2%	35.7%	30.6%	17.3%
Late elementary	0%	2.0%	22.4%	28.6%	46.9%
Middle school	1.0%	5.1%	26.5%	25.5%	41.8%
High school	4.1%	5.2%	24.7%	29.9%	36.1%

Note. Percentages are valid percents.

Question 8

Question 8 asked DACs to consider what an "ideal" assessment program might look like. In particular, Question 8 asked them which tests they would **retain** in the current school level(s) or add to other levels. The results for Question 8 are presented in Table 10. KCCT tests are not given in the early elementary school level; consequently, the 18.4% in the early elementary category for KCCT reflects the percentage of DACs that would like to see KCCT tests added to the early elementary school level. Overall, the results from this table indicate that DACs are most likely to want to retain or add the CTBS tests for all school levels, and are least likely to want to retain or add tests from the "other" category; that is, the non-CATS mandated category.

Table 10. Assessments to be Retained or Added

Assessments	Early elementary	Late elementary	Middle school	High school
KCCT	18.4%	65.3%	63.3%	61.2%
CTBS-5 Math	71.4%	72.4%	77.6%	70.4%
CTBS-5 Lang.	70.4%	70.4%	75.5%	69.4%
Other	27.3%	21.7%	23.8%	27.3%

Question 9

Question 9 also asked DACs to consider what an "ideal" assessment might look like, although Question 9 asked them to indicate which tests they would **eliminate** at the current level or not use at other levels. The results in Table 11 indicate that DACs are least likely to want to eliminate/not use the CTBS-5 tests; the greatest percent of DACs wanting to eliminate CTBS-5 tests was never higher than 13.3%. DACs were more likely to indicate that they wanted to eliminate or not use KCCT and non-CATS mandated tests. Approximately 25% of DACs indicated that they would like to see these tests eliminated or not used across all school levels.

Table 11. Assessments to be Eliminated or Not Used

Assessments	Early elementary	Late elementary	Middle school	High school
KCCT	21.8%	25.5%	22.4%	21.4%
CTBS-5 Math	5.1%	9.2%	10.2%	13.3%
CTBS-5 Lang.	6.1%	9.2%	10.2%	13.3%
Other	23.1%	25.6%	25.6%	25.6%

Question 10

Question 10 was the only question that used an open-response format on the survey. Because of its format, several DACs used it as an opportunity to comment on the testing system in general rather than specifically answering the question. One respondent apparently had asked principals for comments; their comments were listed separately (having come from several people). In addition, several respondents wrote comments or clarifications in other areas of the survey; we included these comments in our analysis of Question 10 comments. Of the 99 surveys returned, 47 included responses to Question 10 or additional comments from other areas of the

survey. Three responses were quite lengthy (respondents continued their answers on the blank back of the page). It is safe to say that nearly all respondents who answered Question 10 either mentioned specific tests that they would like to add or modifications to the testing system that they would like to make.

Our analysis of this question can be divided into two main sections. The first section examines the additional tests that DACs would use, if they could, plus supporting comments. The second section examines themes derived from comments, many of which describe modifications or recommendations about the current testing system.

Table 12 presents additional tests that DACs would use. The test name is followed in parentheses by the number of times a particular test was mentioned. Included, as necessary, is information about when or how these tests would be used. Note that all districts must give CTBS-5 tests in math and reading to students in Grades 3, 6, and 9 as part of the CATS testing system. Many comments referring to CTBS-5 testing discuss additions they have made or would like to make to the state mandates.

Table 12. Tests That District Assessment Coordinators Would Like to Give

Test Name	Comment
CTBS-5 (19)	• …CTBS should be given each year in math and LA, especially reading…
	• I am not sure that CTBS is the only appropriate assessment. I would like to know about other assessments.
	• CTBS-5 at all levels would be sufficient assessment for Kentucky schools.
	• CTBS pre as well as post test might be something to think about in order to get results on gains made within a school year.
KCCT Item Bank (1)	
CTB I-Know (1)	
NAEP (3)	
Test of Cognitive Skills (1)	• Would like to add TCS to 9th grade (cost prohibitive)
GRADE (3)	• Add…at grades K-3…
	• …for secondary levels—used to diagnose, lead/change instructional practice…
	• …for off-year testing…
DIBELS (2)	• Add…at grades K-3…
	• …Use of various diagnostic reading tests such as DIBELS for early literacy intervention…
MAPS (4)	• …for off-year testing
	• Completed on computer and may be administered

	multiple times during school year to assess student progress.
	• MAP if money were available.
	• MAP science, we only use language arts and math.
GMADE (1)	• …for secondary levels—used to diagnose, lead/change instructional practice…
ACT (2) SAT (1)	• …Requirements which are standardized are what's important…
	• …consider ACT scores and subscores for all high school students.
Test Ready (1)	
ThinkLink Learning (1)	
California Achievement Test (1)	• If we had the funding, we would give the California Achievement Test to all levels (fall testing) for diagnostic purposes…
Achieve (1)	• …for off-year testing…
DRA (2)	• …Would also like to add DRA for K-P2…
Rapid Automatic Naming (1)	• …Rapid Automatic Naming for at risk P1-P3…
Lindamood Auditory assessment (1)	
Diagnostic (Developmental ?) Math Assessment (1)	
CCC (1) Compass (1)	• I think a program like CCC or Compass could be used by the state to continually assess students as well as instruct. All money would not be spent on assessment. Data would be available any day of the year and the state could develop their own tests via the web on Compass…
Exit exam (1)	• …second option for grades 9-12, exit exam for all required classes.

As we examined the responses, we saw several themes emerging from the data. This examination of themes comprises the second part of the analysis of Question 10.

The first major theme we found was the desire for data that could be used to track student growth over years. We credited 23 responses as being related to student growth, some of which follow:

- …I wish we gave it (CTBS-5) to every grade so we could compare students to their own scores each year with the same assessments.

- Ideally, should test all kids grades 2-11 annually in all subjects covered under CATS…

- We need to assess math and language arts at all grade levels each year…

The tests associated with this request for longitudinal data, for the most part, were variations of CTBS.

A second major theme dealt with the writing portion of the assessment, with 13 respondents offering a variety of comments. Of these, 4 comments were categorized as generally positive:

- Keep portfolios…

- …The biggest plus in the KCCT is open-response questions. This gives a much better picture than a straight multiple-choice test would.

- Keep the writing portfolios as part of the assessment, but use at all grade levels 4-12.

- I like KCCT because writing is assessed…

The remaining 10 comments suggested that adjustments be made to the writing portion (one respondent gave both a positive comment and a suggestion for adjustment). A sample of these suggestions follows:

- …Believe strongly in value of portfolio assessment for classroom instruction, but do not believe it should be in a high stakes accountability model. Takes too much time away from other subjects; not doing what it was supposed to do and is still doing more harm than good in students' overall development.

- …Would eliminate writing portfolio; would keep a writing component in test 3-12.

- …If continued the writing portfolio, writing portfolio in Grade 11 only, not 4, 7, 12…the open response and writing portfolios should be a part of the subjective assessment at the building level as monitored by the instructional leaders…

- The biggest source of pressure on both teachers and students in the present assessment is the writing portfolio, especially in Grade 4. We believe the portfolio itself is a highly beneficial item; unfortunately, teachers still do not understand or choose not to use "best practice" in helping students develop their pieces. There is too much emphasis on writing "the" portfolio piece instead of selecting pieces from those written for various instructional purposes over time…

- …There are too many open response on the KCCT. The on demand writing is not scored fairly. The same scoring rubric is used to score on demand that is used in scoring writing portfolios. How can this be fair? The student works all year on

polishing portfolio pieces but is expected to produce the same quality of writing in a 90-minute period…

- …I think portfolios should be at all exiting grades—4, 8, 12. I think 5th grade should be science and social studies and on-demand. By having on-demand at a level after portfolios, one could see a correlation between the two…

A third theme was the desire for a nationally normed reference test, with 9 responses:

- …The testing system in Kentucky needs to be a national normed test…

- NAEP assessment—fair and is a national assessment.

- Would like to see CTBS given in grades 10, 11, and 12 instead of KCCT. CTBS is a national normed test…

Five respondents discussed testing for diagnostic purposes:

- GRADE and GMADE for secondary levels—used to diagnose, lead/change instructional practice. Or something that could be used easily and effectively to assist in continuous monitoring and assessment…

- We are in need of diagnostic testing for all grades. I know this is not something the state can pay for, but if we had a test to correlate with current testing it would help address "gap" kids.

- If we had the funding, we would give the California Achievement Test to all levels (fall testing) for diagnostic purposes.

- …Current system seems to be more of a tool for identifying the current academic achievement level of students rather than a tool for diagnosing individual needs/school needs. In diagnosing specific needs in a timely and user-friendly manner, we can have hope of improving student achievement before the next time we measure their level of academic achievement. A good assessment system can and should do both.

- …We use this test (CTBS-5) to target students who score below grade level and offer special tutoring to those students. Teachers use the results to develop lesson plans that are tailored to their students' needs…This program (Test Mate Clarity) is also used to print out each teacher's homeroom and immediately they have a list of their students and what are their weaknesses and strengths…We also use this information to provide extra help to students scoring below grade level…

Concerns about No Child Left Behind requirements accounted for 4 responses:

- Modify KCCT components to be more appropriately aligned with NCLB…

- …though I recognize the need to adapt the existing system to accommodate NCLB mandates…

- Principals have expressed the need to do only one type of assessment. Principals/district want to have one system—the stress of two is taking toll on focus. Many express need to eliminate KCCT or different focus for NCLB.

- …In Kentucky the two standards of accountability is ridiculous. NCLB and state standards should be the same. KDE and the state board of education are not in the trenches tying to explain this situation to parents. Example—how you could possibly receive rewards from the state and not meet AYP on the federal guidelines…

Finally, 3 responses were categorized as generally positive:

- We would keep all assessments as they are in place.

- The CATS test is a solid assessment instrument.

- As with any survey, the questions that are posed could result in inaccurate assessment of the respondent's position. I want to make clear that I think that any divergence from the established standards-based assessment in Kentucky at this time would result in negative impact on school improvement initiatives. Please do not construe any of these responses to indicate that I think we should fundamentally change how we assess students for accountability purposes, though I recognize the need to adapt the existing system to accommodate NCLB mandates. We need to preserve what is essential to the existing structure and not significantly alter it.

Question 11

This question asked DACs to indicate how close their district's current assessment program is to their "ideal" assessment program in terms of the amount of assessment. As in previous questions, DACs were asked to indicate by school level. Their options were "Far too little assessment," "Too little assessment," "About same amount of assessment," "Too much assessment," and "Far too much assessment." Overall, the results in Table 13 indicate that the majority of DACs feel that the amount of assessment in their current assessment program is aligned with their ideal amount of assessment. Nonetheless, roughly 25% of DACs indicated that their current program had too much or far too much assessment in comparison to their ideal assessment system. The exception was for the early elementary school level for which DACs were more likely to indicate that their current system had too little assessment rather than too much assessment.

Table 13. Alignment of Current Assessment Program to Ideal Assessment Program by School Level

School level	Far too little assessment	Too little assessment	About same amount of assessment	Too much assessment	Far too much assessment
Early elementary	6.3%	23.2%	55.8%	12.6%	1.1%
Late elementary	0%	15.8%	54.7%	21.1%	8.4%
Middle school	0%	14.7%	62.1%	18.9%	4.2%
High school	0%	13.7%	57.9%	21.1%	6.3%

Question 12

The final question asked DACs to compare costs and benefits of their current assessment program, again by school level. Their options were "Costs far outweigh benefits," "Costs slightly outweigh benefits," "Costs and benefits are about equal," "Benefits slightly outweigh costs," and "Benefits far outweigh costs." The results in Table 14 indicate that DACs were more likely to indicate that the costs and benefits of the assessment program are about equal than any other option. The high school level was the exception. Slightly more DACs (29.2%) indicated that "costs slightly outweigh benefits" than "costs and benefits are about equal" (28.1%). Even though the majority of DACs indicated that costs and benefits were about equal, a closer look reveals that, with the exception of early elementary, more than 40% of DACs feel that the costs of their current assessment program far outweigh or slightly outweigh the benefits.

Table 14. Costs Incurred Versus Benefits Gained From Current Assessment Program

School level	Costs far outweigh benefits	Costs slightly outweigh benefits	Costs and benefits are about equal	Benefits slightly outweigh costs	Benefits far outweigh costs
Early elementary	7.3%	17.7%	43.8%	12.5%	15.6%
Late elementary	13.5%	29.2%	28.1%	16.7%	12.5%
Middle school	13.5%	29.2%	30.2%	14.6%	11.5%
High school	15.6%	29.2%	28.1%	14.6%	11.5%

Discussion

The purpose of this report was to investigate critics' claims that there is too much testing of students, and that the overabundance of testing takes time away from instruction and student learning. The results from this investigation reveal that, in addition to the CATS mandated tests, approximately 93 additional tests were reported by DACs as being administered to students. This is a large number of non-CATS mandated tests, and upon initial consideration, supports critics' claims that students are subjected to too much testing. A closer examination, however, reveals that the majority of districts (i.e., 52%) administer only 1 – 3 additional tests, and 13% of districts administer no additional tests. The highest number of non-CATS mandated tests

reported by any district was 15, and that occurred for only two districts. Moreover, most of the other tests represent some form of CTBS testing. Furthermore, the majority of the other tests were administered in Grades K-3. These early elementary grades are the grades for which little state mandated testing takes place; these grades do not take KCCT, and the CTBS-5 tests only apply to Grade 3.

Given eight possible purposes for administering tests, the most commonly selected purpose for administering CATS was school/district accountability. The next most commonly selected purpose was measuring student achievement (i.e., student learning). Measuring student achievement was also the most commonly selected purpose for administering non-CATS mandated tests. Teacher accountability and student accountability were among the most infrequently mentioned purposes for administering both CATS and non-CATS tests. The finding that student accountability was among the most infrequently mentioned purposes is consistent with the belief that students have a weak sense of accountability for their test performance. In other words, given that student accountability is not intended to be a purpose of the testing, it is not surprising that many believe students have a weak sense of accountability for their test performance.

DACs were also asked to reflect on the amount of time spent preparing for tests and the amount of time spent in follow-up testing activities. The results from this section of the report indicate that schools spend more time engaging in test preparation activities and less time engaged in test follow-up activities, relative to the actual time spent administering the tests. In particular, DACs reported that that they spent the greatest amount of time preparing for KCCT relative to its administration time, and the least amount of time preparing for non-CATS tests relative to their administration time. For all tests, the majority of DACs reported that less time was spent on follow-up than on test administration. Overall, this set of findings indicates that even though the majority of districts administer 1 to 3 non-CATS mandated tests, comparatively little time is spent on test preparation and test follow-up for these tests.

DACs were also questioned about the amount of time teachers spend on professional development related to testing issues. Early elementary school teachers were reported to spend the least amount of time on professional development related to testing issues (7.54 hours), and late elementary school teachers were reported to spend the most amount of time on professional development related to testing issues (8.37 hours). Given that the least amount of CATS mandated testing occurs at the early elementary school level, it is not surprising that these teachers spent the least amount of time on professional development testing issues. Nonetheless, overall, teachers at all levels spent approximately 8 hours on testing-related professional development. This amount of time constitutes one third of the total amount of professional development time mandated by KRS 158.070.

DACS were also asked to reflect on the amount of pressure brought on by testing, first from the perspective of students and next from the perspective of teachers. The results from these questions are particularly informative. First, for students, the vast majority of DACs perceived that students' level of pressure under the current assessment program is either appropriate or too high. In particular, for early elementary students, 84.5% of DACs reported that current test pressure is "the right amount," "slightly too much," or "too much." The percentage of DACs endorsing these categories for late elementary, middle school, and high school, was 93.8%,

77.3% and 68.8%, respectively. This same pattern emerges for teachers, and is even more pronounced. For early elementary school teachers, 83.6% of DACs reported that the amount of current test pressure placed on teachers is "the right amount," "slightly too much," or "too much." The percentage of DACs endorsing these categories for late elementary, middle school, and high school, was 97.9%, 93.8% and 90.7%, respectively. Overall, these results suggest that only a small minority of DACs feel that current assessment programs place too little pressure on students and, in particular, on teachers. This finding is of particular interest, given that the augmented off-grade NRT testing is slated to begin in spring 2005. If students and teachers are already experiencing sufficiently high levels of pressure under the current assessment program, it is possible that adding additional tests could cause these levels of pressure to rise even higher. Also, it is interesting to consider these results, particularly the results related to student pressure, in relation to recent pushes to increase student accountability on tests. If students are held at increasingly higher levels of accountability for their test performance, then this could cause the already high levels of pressure to rise even higher.

When asked which current assessments should be retained or added, and which should be eliminated or not used, the DACs' responses suggested that they were most accepting of the CTBS-5 tests. DACs most frequently indicated that the CTBS-5 math and language tests should be retained or added to all school levels. Similarly, DACs more frequently indicated that non-CATS mandated tests should be eliminated or not used, and they were the least likely to indicate that the CTBS-5 tests should be eliminated or not used. KCCT tests were less popular than CTBS-5 tests, but more popular than non-mandated tests, in terms of which should be retained/added versus which should be eliminated/not used. Given what appears to be a preference for CTBS-5 tests, this suggests that teachers might be more accepting of augmented off-grade NRT tests that closely resemble CTBS-5 tests.

DACs were also asked which assessments, not currently in use, they would like to add to their assessment program. Twenty-three suggested assessments that would provide longitudinal data and measures of student growth, and 9 suggested the use of a nationally normed test. Ten suggested making changes to the writing portion of the current CATS system, and 5 wished to add diagnostic assessments to their program. The preference for longitudinal assessments also suggests that DACs might respond positively to the concept of the augmented CTBS tests currently planned if a developmental metric is included as part of the reporting process.

When asked to consider the alignment of their current assessment program with their ideal assessment program, DACs generally indicated that the amount of testing in their current assessment program was equally aligned with the amount of testing in their ideal assessment program, although nearly a third of DACs indicated that there was either far too little assessment or too little assessment at the early elementary school level. Conversely, nearly a third of DACs indicated that there was either too much assessment or far too much assessment at the late elementary school level. These results suggest that early elementary teachers may be more receptive to the augmented NRT testing, while late elementary teachers may be less receptive.

Finally, DACs were asked to consider the costs incurred versus the benefits gained from their current assessment program. The results to this question vary somewhat by school level. The greatest benefits were perceived at the early elementary school level. More than 70% of DACs indicated that the benefits are equal to the costs, slightly outweigh the costs, or outweigh

the costs. More than 50% of DACs endorsed these response options for the remaining school levels. However, on the other hand, more than 40% of DACs indicated that the costs either far outweigh the benefits or slightly outweigh the benefits for late elementary, middle school and high school. This indicates that there is a perception of need for improvement at these school levels.

Limitations of This Study

We asked DACs to list only those tests that they gave to a majority of their students; under this directive, several populations of students likely have not been considered, thus reducing the perceived overall testing burden on schools and districts. For example, most tests associated with special education are not included, nor are those associated with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). We recognize that these additional tests can contribute to a school or district's overall testing burden. In December 2000, for example, 78,200 students from 6 to 21 years old were included in the Report of Children and Youth with Disabilities Receiving Special Education and Related Services (http://www.kde.state.ky.us). The state's total public school population for the same year was 614,818. Thus, about 13% of Kentucky's public school population for that year was probably involved in special education testing, such as initial screening or follow-up testing, beyond the regular state and district testing.

Kentucky has seen rapid expansion in the number of students classified as Limited English Proficient. KDE estimates that about 8,500 LEP students are currently enrolled in Kentucky public schools, a 24% increase from last year and a 316.7% increase in the last 10 years (http://www.kde.state.ky.us). We recognize that some schools have relatively large numbers of LEP students who may require additional testing.

Conclusions

Overall, the results from this survey indicate that the majority of districts administer one to three tests in addition to the KCCT, CTBS-5 math and CTBS-5 language. However, most of these non-CATS mandated tests represent some form of CTBS testing, and tend to be administered most frequently in the early elementary school level, which is the school level that currently undergoes the least amount of CATS mandated testing. Moreover, DACs indicate that relatively little school time is spent engaged in preparation activities or follow-up activities for these non-CATS mandated tests. When asked to consider their assessment program as a whole (i.e., both CATS and non-CATS tests), DACs generally indicated that their current assessment program elicits moderate to high levels of pressure from students and teachers, that the amount of assessment is approximately equal to or more than their ideal assessment program, and that the costs of the current assessment program equal the benefits or outweigh the benefits. The early elementary school level departs slightly from these overall trends. DACs' responses for the early elementary school level were generally more positive relative to their responses for other school levels. This may be because less CATS mandated testing occurs in the early elementary school level. Another trend that consistently emerged is that DACs seem to be more receptive to the CTBS-5 math and language tests than to KCCT. For example, DACs more frequently indicated that they would like to see CTBS tests retained/added for all school levels. In conclusion, these findings have important implications for the augmented off-grade NRT tests slated to begin in spring 2005.

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Appendix

Dear District Assessment Coordinator;

Each year, Kentucky's public school students are faced with a variety of tests given for a variety of purposes, in addition to the state-mandated CATS assessment program. In order to learn more about the scope of additional testing that is taking place within the state, the Kentucky Department of Education has hired the Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO) to conduct a survey.

As your district's assessment coordinator, we are asking you to complete the survey, which will address five main areas:

1. What tests are being given in your district in addition to KCCT and CTBS-5 tests?
2. How much time is spent testing in general (not just time associated with the KCCT/CTBS-5 tests)?
3. What is the purpose of each of these tests?
4. How much pressure do students and teachers feel because of these tests?
5. How do these tests support the delivery of a coherent education curriculum?

We want to learn about tests being given to the majority of students in a grade. Please do not include those tests associated with special education testing done on an individual basis. Also, do not include tests developed by individual teachers for use within their classrooms.

Your **answers are confidential** and **will not be reported by district name**. Please include your district name on the survey, so HumRRO can combine your responses with those from other districts in your region or with districts having similar demographics. Please print this survey, complete it and seal it in an envelope. **Then bring it with you to your DAC training**, where it will be collected. If you forget, extra copies of the survey will be available at the DAC training.

Completing this survey will help the Kentucky Department of Education understand more thoroughly the issues facing the state's students and teachers. If you have any questions, please call 1 800 219-9030 and ask for Art Thacker or Lee Koger.

Sincerely,

Arthur Thacker
Senior Scientist
HumRRO

1. Please write in all tests your district is responsible for administering to the majority of its students and indicate the grade(s) in which they are given. Note that KCCT and CTBS-5 tests are already included since all districts give these.

Test name	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
KCCT tests	□	□	□	□	■	■	□	■	■	□	■	■	■
CTBS-5 associated with CATS (math)	□	□	□	■	□	□	■	□	□	■	□	□	□
CTBS-5 associated with CATS (lang. arts)	□	□	□	■	□	□	■	□	□	■	□	□	□
4.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
5.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
6.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
7.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
8.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
9.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
10.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
11.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
12.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
13.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
14.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
15.	□	□	□	□	■	□	□	■	□	■	□	■	□
16.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
17.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
18.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
19.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
20.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□

2. This question asks you to explain why your district uses each test. Please use the following key in selecting your answer, and limit yourself to one main purpose and one secondary purpose, if applicable. Please write in the letter of the purpose you selected in the appropriate box. Note that test number 4 corresponds to the test that appears in item 4 of the previous question, and so on. Please provide an explanation for any tests for which you chose "Other" (Selection H) as a purpose on the back of this page.

    A. Screening for diagnostic insights such as academic problems/difficulties/weaknesses
    B. Helping measure student achievement
    C. Helping change instructional practice
    D. Student accountability
    E. Teacher accountability
    F. School/district accountability
    G. Helping to inform retention/promotion/placement decisions
    H. Other

Test	Main Purpose	Secondary Purpose*	Test	Main Purpose	Secondary Purpose*
KCCT			11.		
CTBS-5 (math)			12.		
CTBS-5 (lang. arts)			13.		
4.			14.		
5.			15.		
6.			16.		
7.			17.		
8.			18.		
9.			19.		
10.			20.		

*if applicable

The following section contains two questions that ask you about the amount of instructional time that students spend in preparing for and following up on specific tests. We ask you to compare the time spent in these activities to the amount of time spent actually taking the specific test. We do not ask you for the specific amount of time spent taking each test; this will be determined through the various testing companies' websites or conversations with company officials.

3. Does your district or its schools do any **special test preparation activities** for any of these tests **during instructional time**? Please compare the amount of time spent in follow up activities to the amount of time spent in taking the test. Examples of this activity include filling out registration forms in advance, practicing specific test-taking skills or taking scrimmage tests, as well as getting students to and from the testing area. Do not include time spent in normal instruction designed to improve test scores in general.

Preparing for this test takes:

	More than amount of time spent in admin of this test	Less than amount of time spent in admin of this test	About the same amount of time spent in admin of this test	Do not know/Does not apply
KCCT	☐	☐	☐	☐
CTBS-5 (math)	☐	☐	☐	☐
CTBS-5 (lang. arts)	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.	☐	☐	☐	☐
9.	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.	☐	☐	☐	☐
11.	☐	☐	☐	☐
12.	☐	☐	☐	☐
13.	☐	☐	☐	☐
14.	☐	☐	☐	☐
15.	☐	☐	☐	☐
16.	☐	☐	☐	☐
17.	☐	☐	☐	☐
18.	☐	☐	☐	☐
19.	☐	☐	☐	☐
20.	☐	☐	☐	☐

4. Does your district or its schools do any **special follow up activities** for any of these tests **during instructional time**? Please compare the amount of time spent in follow up activities to the amount of time spent in taking the test. Examples of this activity might include going over test results during class.

Following up on this test takes:

	More than amount of time spent in admin of this test	Less than amount of time spent in admin of this test	About the same amount of time spent in admin of this test	Do not know/Does not apply
KCCT	□	□	□	□
CTBS-5 (math)	□	□	□	□
CTBS-5 (lang. arts)	□	□	□	□
4.	□	□	□	□
5.	□	□	□	□
6.	□	□	□	□
7.	□	□	□	□
8.	□	□	□	□
9.	□	□	□	□
10.	□	□	□	□
11.	□	□	□	□
12.	□	□	□	□
13.	□	□	□	□
14.	□	□	□	□
15.	□	□	□	□
16.	□	□	□	□
17.	□	□	□	□
18.	□	□	□	□
19.	□	□	□	□
20.	□	□	□	□

5. How long (in total hours), on average, do teachers spend in **professional development related to all types of testing**? This might include learning about tests they must give, learning about specific test administration procedures, or learning how to analyze or interpret test results. Please indicate in the appropriate cell the average number of hours spent.

Average number of hours	Teachers by level
_____ hours	Early elementary (K-3)
_____ hours	Late elementary (4-5)
_____ hours	Middle school (6-8)
_____ hours	High school (9-12)

Think of the **total amount of testing** (not just the KCCT/CTBS-5 tests) that students at different school levels in your district take each year. Please rate the level of pressure **most** of your students and teachers face. The "right amount of pressure" is enough to ensure that students and teachers take an assessment seriously; "too little pressure" indicates that students do not take a particular assessment seriously enough (many blank or flippant responses, for example), and "too much pressure" indicates symptoms such as frequent tears, upset stomachs, or emotional outbursts associated with a test.

6. **Students'** level of pressure under current assessment program

Student level	Too little pressure	Slightly too little pressure	Right amount of pressure	Slightly too much pressure	Too much pressure
	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Early elem (K-3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Late elem (4-5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Middle school (6-8)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
High school (9-12)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

7. **Teachers'** level of pressure under current assessment program

Teacher level	Too little pressure	Slightly too little pressure	Right amount of pressure	Slightly too much pressure	Too much pressure
	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Early elem (K-3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Late elem (4-5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Middle school (6-8)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
High school (9-12)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

This section asks you several questions to consider if you were asked to design an "ideal" assessment program from the ground up that would support a coherent educational curriculum. Question 8 asks which assessments you would retain or add; Question 9 asks which you would eliminate.

8. First of all, think of the assessments that you currently give—which would you **retain** in the current level or **add** to another level?

Test number	Would **retain or add** this test for the following levels:			
	Early elementary	Late elementary	Middle school	High school
KCCT	☐	☐	☐	☐
CTBS-5 (math)	☐	☐	☐	☐
CTBS-5 (LA)	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.	☐	☐	☐	☐
9.	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.	☐	☐	☐	☐
11.	☐	☐	☐	☐
12.	☐	☐	☐	☐
13.	☐	☐	☐	☐
14.	☐	☐	☐	☐
15.	☐	☐	☐	☐
16.	☐	☐	☐	☐
17.	☐	☐	☐	☐
18.	☐	☐	☐	☐
19.	☐	☐	☐	☐
20.	☐	☐	☐	☐

9. Which of your current assessments would you **eliminate** at the current level or **not use** at other levels?

Test number	Would **eliminate or not use** this test for the following levels:			
	Early elementary	Late elementary	Middle school	High school
KCCT	☐	☐	☐	☐
CTBS-5 (math)	☐	☐	☐	☐
CTBS-5 (LA)	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.	☐	☐	☐	☐
9.	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.	☐	☐	☐	☐
11.	☐	☐	☐	☐
12.	☐	☐	☐	☐
13.	☐	☐	☐	☐
14.	☐	☐	☐	☐
15.	☐	☐	☐	☐
16.	☐	☐	☐	☐
17.	☐	☐	☐	☐
18.	☐	☐	☐	☐
19.	☐	☐	☐	☐
20.	☐	☐	☐	☐

10. Are there any other assessments that you currently don't use that you would use instead?

Would add or substitute the following tests:

11. In terms of the amount of assessment, how close is your district's current assessment program to your ideal program, by school level?

School level	Far too little assessment	Too little assessment	About same amount of assessment	Too much assessment	Far too much assessment
	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Early elementary	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Late elementary	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Middle school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
High school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

12. Think of the costs incurred and benefits gained from your current assessment program, and rate how costs and benefits compare, by level. Remember that costs can refer to actual financial costs, stress, lost instructional time, etc. while benefits can refer to improved accountability, in-depth knowledge of student achievement, diagnosis of problems, etc.

School level	Costs far outweigh benefits	Costs slightly outweigh benefits	Costs and benefits are about equal	Benefits slightly outweigh costs	Benefits far outweigh costs
	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Early elementary	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Late elementary	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Middle school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
High school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

13. Please include your district's name in the space below. Remember, results are confidential and will not be reported by district name, but they may be combined with responses from other districts in your region or with responses from districts with similar demographics.

_____

Thanks for your assistance!